

CROYDON PHILATELIC SOCIETY:
MINUTES OF THE MEETING 25.03.2014



President Brian Asquith opened the meeting attended by 16 members at 19.45 hours and invited **GRAHAM BOOTH** to present his display on **BRUNEL'S THREE SHIPS**.

The first part of the evening was a display of Ship Letters carried by the **SS Great Western** across the Atlantic Ocean from a number of places to a variety of destinations. The ship, built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, was the first steamship specially designed for the Atlantic and sailed from Bristol and later from Liverpool. It carried mail as well as passengers from Bristol/Liverpool to New York. Forwarding agents were employed to ensure the mail was placed on the ship. The Ship Letters were marked with amounts that had been paid including the Inland Letter rate for the country plus Freight Money which was the amount paid for the journey across the Atlantic.

The second part of the display was in three parts: firstly the mail carried by the Great Western to the West Indies and later to South America when the New York run ended; secondly material on the **SS Great Britain**; and thirdly the story of the **SS Great Eastern**.

The **SS Great Britain**, Brunel's second ship, carried mail also including two Ship Letters of the maiden voyage – one to New York and the other on the return journey. After a varied life including taking troops to the Crimea War the ship was abandoned in the Falkland Islands. However, after many years it was eventually brought to Bristol and now, following restoration, is a major tourist attraction in the town.

The **SS Great Eastern**, built at Millwall on the Thames was the largest ship of its time being five times larger than any other ship. Its size made it difficult to manoeuvre. Its main claim to fame was laying telegraph cables including across the Atlantic Ocean.

Graham presented his display with clarity and with detail which was of great interest to the audience. Following a vote of thanks by Graham Harker the meeting closed at 21.45 hours.

Graham Harker, Honorary Assistant Secretary
Ref: CroyPhilMin25.03.2014
26.03.2014